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ABSTRACT

This self-instructional module, one volume of a series of competency-based modules in human relations skills for occupational specialists, is designed to help the specialist understand the complexity of vocational counseling and to facilitate the development of skills and competencies needed to adequately provide vocational counseling. Other modules in this set of three are Basic Parent Counseling Skills for the Occupational Specialist, and Basic Counseling for Personal Concerns for the Occupational Specialist. The module provides a prospectus, which details objectives and explains how to use the module; a flow-chart, which illustrates the self-instructional process; a pre-assessment quiz; and a work plan in chart form. Instructional activities (reading assignments and learning activities) are listed for each of the 10 enabling elements or lessons. The enabling elements define vocational counseling and discuss theories of career choice, counselor qualities, a framework for vocational counseling, counseling strategies, decision making skills, counseling special populations, innovative approaches, resources, and professionalism. Each lesson includes a worksheet and a self-test; a post-assessment covering the entire module and a bibliography complete the booklet. (JAC)

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# Basic Vocational Counseling Skills for the Occupational Specialist

COMPETENCY-BASED MODULAR SERIES

Jeanne M. Boland
Joyce M. Chick, Editor

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Basic Vocational Counseling Skills for the Occupational Specialist

Prepared by:
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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# P R E F A C E

## Competency-based Modular Series on Human Relations Skills For Occupational Specialists

Through grant funding by the Florida Department of Education, Division of Vocational Education, three sets of competency-based modules have been developed on Human Relations Skills for Occupational Specialists.

The need for self-instructional materials to provide competency-based training in human relations skills was identified through needs assessment research conducted by a doctoral candidate with occupational specialists in the state. Prior to the development of this modular series, no available materials in the area of human relations skills training addressed the particular needs of occupational specialists, although this type of personnel is frequently confronted with the need for human relations skills in working with students, administrators, parents, and businesspeople in the private sector. Therefore, it is anticipated that the instructional materials in this series will serve a timely need.

The modules included in this set address three areas of human relations skills: (1) Basic Personal Counseling Skills, (2) Basic Vocational Counseling Skills, and (3) Basic Parent Counseling Skills. Each module specifically ties its skills to a vocational orientation and to the job setting of the occupational specialist.

When occupational specialists develop their abilities in the above areas, their job performance should be enhanced, and they should be better equipped to meet the needs of those whom they serve.

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# P R O S P E C T U S

As an occupational specialist, much of what you do may actually fall under the heading of "vocational counseling." Whether you are talking to a student about different career options, conducting a vocational exploration group, or talking to a class about the world of work, you are, to varying degrees, providing vocational counseling. This extremely complex process requires a knowledge of a variety of counseling theories and styles, as well as a variety of vocational theories.

As Burck (1975) notes, "when we look at the complexity of the task, we might find it is more intricate and difficult than much so-called personal-social counseling. Perhaps it may be that a greater diversity of skills and competencies are needed" (p.7).

This module reflects that diversity, with elements ranging from vocational development theories, to counseling qualities and strategies, to professionalism. The purpose of this instructional module is to assist the occupational specialist in understanding the complexity of the task and to facilitate the development of the skills and competencies needed to adequately provide vocational counseling.

## Objectives of the Module

After having read resource materials, participated in simulated counseling sessions, and completed structured exercises, the occupational specialist will be able to achieve the following objectives:

1. Define vocational counseling and describe the role of the occupational specialist in providing vocational counseling.
2. List two major categories of theories that explain career choice and describe an example of each.
3. Describe three essential qualities of a vocational counselor and explain why these qualities are important.
4. List the four parts of a counseling session and describe two behaviors the occupational specialist should practice in each part of the session.
5. Discuss vocational counseling strategies to use with vocationally undecided students and with students who have tentative vocational choices and describe two games students who come for vocational counseling may play.
6. List the three steps in the decision-making process and explain the importance of this process.
7. Identify special considerations in counseling with women, handicapped persons, and minority students.
8. List three advantages of the short-term contractual approach to vocational counseling, six ways to gather information, and one purpose of the case conference approach.
9. List three kinds of resources used by occupational specialists and explain why resources are important.
10. Describe the four parts of an Individualized Written Professional Development Program.

## Working through the Module

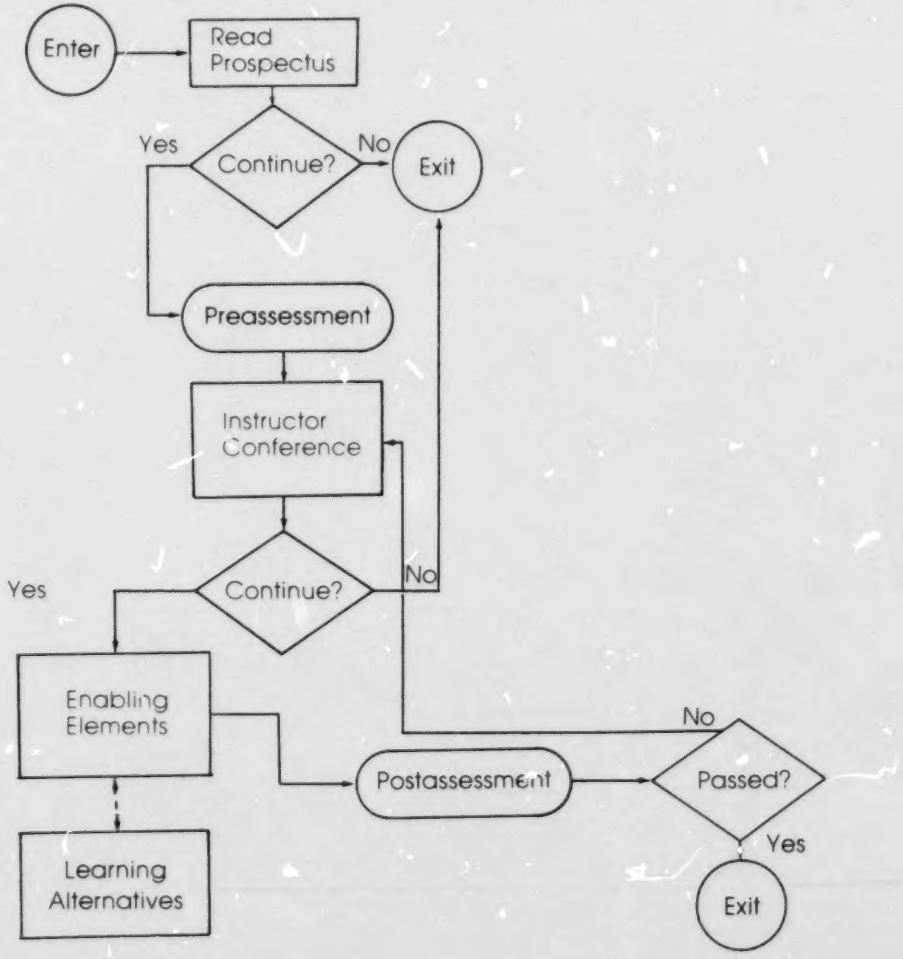
A flowchart is presented on the following page to help you progress through this module.

After you have read the Prospectus and decided to continue, you will begin by filling out the Preassessment. This test will help you select the enabling elements you need to complete. You may wish to discuss the results of your Preassessment and your choice of enabling elements with your instructor or counselor before you proceed further.

A module work plan is included to assist you in planning your activities in the module and to provide you with a format for remembering your ideas as you work through your selected objectives.

A Postassessment appears after the last enabling element. You should complete this form after you have accomplished all the elements that you have selected.

# M O D U L E F L O W C H A R T



# P R E A S S E S S M E N T

Please evaluate your knowledge of vocational counseling skills by circling the letter before the appropriate response for each item below. On the basis of the instructions following the answers you choose, decide on a work plan to meet your needs in completing the objectives of the module. You may wish to consult with a supervisor in constructing your work plan.

**1.** Can you define vocational counseling and describe the role of the occupational specialist?
   A. Yes
   B. No (complete Enabling Element 1)
   C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 1)

**2.** Can you describe three major theories of career development?
   A. Yes
   B. No (complete Enabling Element 2)
   C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 2)

**3.** Can you describe the qualities essential to a vocational counselor?
   A. Yes
   B. No (complete Enabling Element 3)
   C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 3)

**4.** Can you describe the four parts of a counseling session?
   A. Yes
   B. No (complete Enabling Element 4)
   C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 4)

**5.** Can you list five strategies for helping students with differing vocational counseling needs?
   A. Yes
   B. No (complete Enabling Element 5)
   C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 5)

**6.** Can you list the three steps in the decision-making process?
   A. Yes
   B. No (complete Enabling Element 6)
   C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 6)

**7.** Can you describe special considerations in counseling with women, handicapped persons, and minority students?
   A. Yes
   B. No (complete Enabling Element 7)
   C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 7)

8. Can you describe three innovative approaches to vocational counseling?
   A. Yes
   B. No (complete Enabling Element 8)
   C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 8)

9. Can you list three categories of resources and describe ways of developing resources in each category?
   A. Yes
   B. No (complete Enabling Element 9)
   C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 9)

10. Can you describe an Individualized Professional Development Program and list four reasons for pursuing professional development activities?
    A. Yes
    B. No (complete Enabling Element 10)
    C. Not sure (complete Self-Test 10)

# M O D U L E W O R K P L A N

**(to be filled out with instructor's assistance)**

| | Enabling Elements | To Be Completed | Completed | Notes and Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Define vocational counseling and describe the role of the occupational specialist in providing vocational counseling. | | | |
| 2. | List two major categories of theories that explain career choice and describe an example of each. | | | |
| 3. | Describe three essential qualities of a vocational counselor and explain why these qualities are important. | | | |
| 4. | List the four parts of a counseling session and describe two behaviors the occupational specialist should practice in each part of the session. | | | |
| 5. | Discuss vocational counseling strategies to use with vocationally undecided students and with students who have tentative vocational choices and describe two games students who come for vocational counseling may play. | | | |
| 6. | List the three steps in the decision-making process and explain the importance of this process. | | | |
| 7. | Identify special considerations in counseling with women, handicapped persons, and minority students. | | | |
| 8. | List three advantages of the short-term contractual approach to vocational counseling, six ways to gather information, and one purpose of the case conference approach. | | | |

# M O D U L E W O R K P L A N

**(to be filled out with instructor's assistance)**

| Enabling Elements | To Be Completed | Completed | Notes and Comments |
|---|---|---|---|
| **9.** List three kinds of resources used by occupational specialists and explain why resources are important. | | | |
| **10.** Describe the four parts of an Individualized Written Professional Development Program. | | | |

# ENABLING ELEMENT 1

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to define vocational counseling and describe the role of the occupational specialist in providing vocational counseling.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and at least one of the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 1. If you cannot answer the questions on the test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for additional activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "Vocational Counseling—What Is It?"
2. Read pages 121-137 in: Patterson, C.H. An Introduction to Counseling in the School. New York: Harper and Row, 1971.
3. Read pages 492-500 in: Norris, W.; Zeran, F.R.; and Hatch, R.N. The Information Service in Guidance. 2nd ed. Chicago: Rand McNally and Co., 1966.
4. Write your own definition of vocational counseling and give three examples of situations in which you have provided vocational counseling to students.

## Vocational Counseling—What Is It?

A definition of vocational counseling can be approached in a variety of ways. Tyler (1969) discusses the use of occupational information in the counseling process. Weinrach (1979) views vocational counseling as a subsystem of vocational guidance, which is itself a subsystem of career education. Reardon and Burck (1975) talk about career counseling as a means of facilitating career development. For the occupational specialist, vocational counseling is all of the above; it is a process through which the occupational specialist works in a one-to-one or group situation to facilitate the career development of students by taking into consideration the students' needs, self-concepts, interests, aptitudes, knowledges, skills, and values.

As in any counseling situation, the needs of each client dictate the direction of the vocational counseling being provided. Thus, the occupational specialist must recognize the uniqueness of each individual, the different maturation levels found in the vocational development process, and the importance of beginning counseling at the student's level, rather than at the point at which the occupational specialist thinks the student probably should be. He or she must remember that chronological age may only suggest a starting point for counseling. Through the counseling relationship, the occupational specialist should come to understand the student's actual perception of the world of work.

Some students may seek out the occupational specialist with a vague "I need to talk about jobs" when they suddenly find a planned career alternative blocked. For others, vocational counseling may involve an exploration of different career options in an interest area; whereas a different type of student may use vocational counseling to work through feelings about value systems. This type of student, for example, may be

concerned because, "My parents want me to be a doctor like my dad, and my teacher tells me I am good with cars and ought to become an auto mechanic; but I want to be a writer—if I am good enough."

When a student enters the process, he or she brings an individual background of family occupations, life experiences, social and psychological factors, needs, values, self-concepts, and friends. The occupational specialist must consider all of these factors in working with that particular student and must recognize the effect each factor has had on that person. Different occupational/career development theories may afford each of these factors a different degree of influence, but no one theory works for all individuals. The occupational specialist should consider the various developmental theories that have been conceived, and then he or she should formulate a personal foundation on which to build his or her vocational counseling.

After reviewing this range of theories, Hoppock (1967) suggests that they contain more similarities than differences and points out that:

> both occupations and people differ; that the choice of an occupation may help or hinder success and satisfaction; that choices are affected by needs and should be affected also by abilities and by employment opportunities; that some choices are realistic, some fantastic, and some in between; that many persons make several different choices before committing themselves to any one choice; that choices may continue to change through the working lifetime of the individual; and that a counselor may sometimes help a person to make better choices than he would without help.

The occupational specialist's role in the vocational counseling process is that of a facilitator. While the occupational specialist will not want to take responsibility away from the student by making the student's career decisions, he or she can help the student to view alternatives that relate to the student's values, interests, or abilities. The occupational specialist helps the student by:

1. listening
2. offering feedback
3. recommending reading or activities
4. providing information
5. reflecting back what the student is saying

While the focus of this module will be primarily on one-to-one vocational counseling, the occupational specialist is encouraged to review the module on group skills, since working in groups is another format that may prove effective in providing vocational counseling.

**Self-Test 1**

1. Define vocational counseling.

2. Why does vocational counseling vary with different students?

3. List some of the things the occupational specialist does when providing vocational counseling.

# ENABLING ELEMENT 2

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to list two major categories of theories that explain career choice and describe an example of each.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and one of the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 2. If you cannot answer the questions on the test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for additional activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "Theories of Career Choice."
2. Read chapter 2 in: Reardon, Robert C., and Burck, Harman D., eds. Facilitating Career Development. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1975.
3. Read pages 173-197 in: Hollis, J.W., and Hollis, L.U. Personalizing Information Processes. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969.
4. Write out your own theory of vocational development, incorporating the theories you have read about and your personal experiences.
5. Read: Baumgardner, S.R. "Vocational Planning: The Great Swindle." The Personnel and Guidance Journal 56 (September 1977): 17-21.
6. Read chapter 4 in: Zytowski, D.G., ed. Vocational Behavior. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1968.
7. With a fellow-worker, discuss how your own vocational development relates to the theories about which you have read.
8. Read chapter 3 in: Norris, W.; Hatch, R.; Engelkes, J.; and Winborn, B. The Career Information Service. 4th ed. Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1979.

## Theories of Career Choice

Numerous theories have been developed to explain how people make occupational choices. While they all have implications for the occupational specialist, no one theory will necessarily fit a given student. Thus, the occupational specialist should recognize that the following discussion of theories will not be all inclusive, but will attempt only to provide a view of the range of theories that have been promulgated.

Theories of occupational choice fall into two broad categories:

1. theories that explain occupational choice as an event occurring at a point in time
2. theories that explain occupational choice as a developmental process occurring over an extended period of time

Included in the first category are trait and factor theories. These theories relate vocational choice directly to an individual's interests, abilities, needs, parents' occupations, and values. A prime example of adherence to the trait-factor approach is to give an individual an interest test and then tell the person that he or she should pursue a particular career based on the test result. While trait-factor theories supply relevant supportive data, they are not sufficient to explain vocational choice on their own.

Also in this category are the occupational choice theories of several sociologists. Caplow suggests that error and accident play the largest roles in career choice, with supporting roles being played by parental occupation and formal education. In a similar vein, Miller and Form place emphasis on the process of trial and error in career selection (Hewer, 1968).

Roe, whose theory also falls in the first category, places emphasis on psychological needs and personality traits arising from early parental attitudes. These attitudes may be expressed as emotional concentration on the child (overly protective or overly demanding), avoidance of the child through emotional rejection or neglect, and acceptance of the child. When the child grows up and chooses a career, that choice then reflects his or her early experiences. For example, Roe (1968) states, "Persons brought up in rejecting homes may develop intense defense awareness of others; if so they will probably have aggressive tendencies which may most readily find socially acceptable expression in occupational terms" (p. 239).

Holland's theory also relates personality style to occupational choice, but not on the basis of psychological needs. He identifies six basic personality types with six corresponding work environments, and he believes the more congruence there is between the person's personality type and his or her work environment, the more satisfied the person should be. The six personality types he delineates are as follows: realistic, social, conventional, investigative, enterprising, and artistic. According to Holland's theory, a good environment for a realistic person would be that of a truck driver or farmer, a social work environment might be that of a counselor or social worker; a conventional work environment might be that of a postal clerk or bank cashier; an investigative work environment would be that of the biologist or chemist; an enterprising work environment is typified by the situation of the car salesperson or politician; and the artistic work environment is characterized by the artist's, musician's, or poet's workplace. Holland believes an individual's personality type directs the individual toward the major occupational class, while selection of a specific career within the occupational class is based on the individual's self-evaluation, information, intelligence, and ability to perform in that environment. Holland's (1968) two basic hypotheses are:

1. "Persons with inaccurate self-knowledge make inadequate choices more frequently than do persons with more accurate self-knowledge," where "self-knowledge is defined as a person's ability to make discriminations among potential environments in terms of his own attributes" (p. 293).
2. "Persons with more information about occupational environments make more adequate choices than do persons with less information" (p. 294).

The second category of career development theories, which views career choice as a developmental process, includes theories developed by Ginzberg and Super. Ginzberg originally believed that occupational choice was an irreversible process occurring between ages 10 and 21, with the vocational decision resulting from compromises between an individual's need structure and reality. This vocational development was divided into three major periods: fantasy, tentative, and realistic.

Ginzberg has, however, reformulated this theory (1979) to now describe decision making as an open-ended process involving reversible decisions and continuing throughout life. In addition, he now considers optimization, rather than compromise between the individual's needs and reality factors, to be the basis of a person's decision.

Super proposes what is probably the broadest of the current vocational theories. He describes five stages in the career development process: growth, exploration (including fantasy, tentative, and realistic), establishment, maintenance, and decline. He found that individuals may be qualified for a number of occupations on the basis of their abilities, interests, and personalities, and that a variety of individuals may find satisfaction within an occupation.

The following excerpts from pages 127-128 of Super's chapter in Zytowski's Vocational Behavior (1968) provide a summary of this theory:

> The process of vocational development is essentially that of developing and implementing a self-concept; it is a compromise process in which the self-concept is a product of the interaction of inherited aptitudes, neural and endocrine make-up. . . .[Since self-concepts change,] making choices and adjustment is a continuous process. . . .
>
> The nature of the career pattern (that is, the occupational level attained and the sequence, frequency, and duration of trial and stable jobs) is determined by the individual's parental socioeconomic level, mental ability and personality characteristics and by the opportunities to which he is exposed. . . .
>
> Development through the life stages can be guided, partly by facilitating the process of maturation of abilities and interests and partly by aiding in reality testing and in the development of the self-concept. . . .
>
> The process of compromise between individual and social factors, between self-concept and reality, is one of role playing, whether the role is played in fantasy, in the counseling interview, or in real life activities such as school classes, clubs, part-time work and entry jobs. . . .
>
> Work satisfactions and life satisfactions depend upon the extent to which the individual finds adequate outlets for his abilities, interests, personality traits and values; they depend upon his establishment in a type of work, a work situation, and a way of life in which he can play the kind of role which his growth and exploratory experiences have led him to consider congenial and appropriate.

**Self-Test 2**

1. Describe two categories of career development theories.

2. What is meant by a "trait and factor" theory?

3. Describe the major components of Super's theory.

# ENABLING ELEMENT 3

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to describe three essential qualities of a vocational counselor and explain why these qualities are important.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and one of the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 3. If you cannot answer the questions on the test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for additional activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "Essential Qualities for Vocational Counseling."
2. Read chapter 9 in: Hoppock, Robert. Occupational Information. 4th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1976.
3. With a fellow-worker, conduct a 5-minute simulated counseling session. Have your colleague portray a student who comes to see you for vocational counseling. After the session, you and your partner should rate your counseling behavior on the basis of understanding, sincerity, and acceptance.
4. Draw up a list of ways you show your students that you understand and accept them.

## Essential Qualities for Vocational Counseling

To be effective as a vocational counselor, the occupational specialist must have certain specific knowledges and skills, many of which are addressed in this module. However, in addition to knowledges (such as theories of vocational development and availability of resources) and skills (such as providing a framework for counseling and utilizing different strategies for different student needs), the occupational specialist should also possess certain qualities that can enhance the counseling process. Leona Tyler (1969) suggests three of these qualities—acceptance, understanding, and sincerity.

Acceptance is a complex phenomenon. It does **not** imply that one must like all students or all of their behaviors, but rather it involves accepting the **whole** person and not comparing each student with a preconceived standard. It involves recognizing the uniqueness of each individual, his or her capacity for change, and the value of each as a human being. The occupational specialist shows acceptance by warmth, honesty, and respect. This is accomplished by listening when the student is speaking and by being nonjudgmental in responding to the student. Instead of saying, "That was the wrong thing to do," the occupational specialist's reply to a student might be, "Are you willing to take responsibility for what you did?" Whereas the first response is judgmental, the second response does not label the behavior as right or wrong, but rather implies that the responsibility for the behavior rests with the student. The occupational specialist must remember that the psychological world of the student is different from the psychological world of the occupational specialist, and although the two parties may view the world differently, the student's different perception must be accepted and recognized as a reality for that student.

This difference in perception also comes into play in relation to understanding. While it is impossible to totally understand another person, attempting to view the world as it is viewed by the student fosters understanding. To facilitate understanding, the occupational specialist utilizes the attending behaviors discussed in other modules, such as active listening, attentive posture, and verbal following. Unfortunately, many people never develop understanding unless they have a comparable experience, and many adults simply do not remember the intensity of feelings they possessed when they were adolescents. For example, consider the feelings of inadequacy and frustration of a student who is trying, but who cannot get good grades; or the feelings of inferiority and separation when the rest of a student's peer group have plans for the future and the student has none. Statements such as "Everybody feels that way sometime in their life" or "Well, why don't you study more" or "Quit acting like a baby" do not show understanding, nor do they facilitate further communication with the student.

The third essential quality the occupational specialist must possess is sincerity. This quality, while difficult to define, is easy to detect in a counseling interaction. Sincerity is a genuineness, an honesty or authenticity in interaction with another. As Tyler (1969) points out, the opposite of sincerity is phoniness. In providing vocational counseling for a student, the occupational specialist cannot be anyone but who he or she is. If the counselor is playing a role, the student will quickly detect this and communication will break down.

Although sincerity, acceptance, and understanding are not measurable qualities, they can be assessed by self-report forms. It may be helpful to have students occasionally fill out such forms after a vocational counseling session. Statements such as "I felt the occupational specialist understood what I was trying to say" or "He really seemed to care about my problems" will probably indicate that the counselor demonstrated one or more of the three qualities.

In providing vocational counseling, the occupational specialist should keep in mind that the student who elects to see an occupational specialist takes the three qualities for granted. The student expects to be met with understanding, sincerity, and acceptance, or the student would seek assistance elsewhere. Therefore, the occupational specialist must establish these three qualities as a foundation, to be augmented by all of the knowledges and skills required to provide vocational counseling.

**Self-Test 3**

1. What are the three essential qualities of a vocational counselor?

2. Why are these important?

# ENABLING ELEMENT 4

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to list the four parts of a counseling session and describe two behaviors the occupational specialist should practice in each part of the session.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and one of the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 4. If you cannot answer the questions on the test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "A Framework for Vocational Counseling."
2. After you have completed a vocational counseling session with a student, complete the Self-Analysis Worksheet included in this element.
3. Read chapter 4 in: Tyler, L.E. The Work of the Counselor. 3rd ed. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969.
4. Read pages 5-18 and 235-246 in Cull, J.G., and Hardy, R.E. Counseling Strategies with Special Populations. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1975.

## A Framework for Vocational Counseling

A simplified way of approaching any counseling session has been developed by Cull and Hardy (1975). They divide the counseling session into four parts:

1. greeting
2. opening
3. body
4. closing

This framework provides the occupational specialist with a sense of direction in the session, regardless of the specific needs being addressed and regardless of whether an individual or a group counseling session is involved.

Although the greeting is something we all take for granted, Cull and Hardy note that the time spent in the greeting is inversely related to how well the counselor knows the student. During the first meeting with a student, more time is spent on the greeting; however, the better the counselor knows the student, the less time he or she will need to spend on the greeting. Since the greeting may represent the first impression on the student, it is important to demonstrate warmth and caring. The counselor may want to greet the student at the door, rather than remaining seated behind a desk. He or she will also want to make sure that the office is arranged in such a manner that there are no barriers between the counselor and the student while they are talking. We greet people so often that we give it little thought and frequently do not realize that a greeting can say either "I am really glad to see you, and I look forward to knowing you better" or "I have had a long day and wish this meeting were over." That simple greeting can have a significant impact on the counseling session and the overall counseling relationship.

The opening consists of a statement of the goals and objectives of the counseling session. During the first meeting, the student will generally provide the direction by stating his or her purpose for coming to see the occupational specialist. However, while listening to the student, the occupational

specialist will want to make mental notes of additional goals or objectives that the specialist feels are important, but that may not be recognized by the student. The opening is extremely important, because a lack of understanding of the goals and objectives leads to "second guessing" on the part of the student and/or occupational specialist. With an accurate statement of goals and objectives, the occupational specialist understands the student and the student better understands why the occupational specialist may be asking various questions as the counseling session progresses.

The body of the counseling session consists of the accomplishment of the stated goals and objectives. In the body of the meeting, the occupational specialist will want to keep in mind such things as the verbal and nonverbal behavior of both the student and occupational specialist, the clarity and speed of the occupational specialist's speech patterns, and attending behaviors that show an interest in the student. All of the human relations skills that the occupational specialist has learned will be utilized in vocational counseling sessions.

The closing includes a restatement of the goals and objectives, a summary of what was discussed and/or accomplished during the meeting, any assignment of tasks for the student and/or occupational specialist, and agreement on a date and time for the next meeting.

Within the preceding framework, the occupational specialist can fulfill the variety of needs dictated by various students. For example, a goal may be the dissemination of information to facilitate vocational exploration, the expansion of vocational alternatives, or decision making. In many cases, the most loosely defined session will be the first meeting. The student may arrive with an unrealistic goal, such as "I need you to tell me what would be the best career for me." In a case such as this, the student's goal and the occupational specialist's goal will differ. Thus the actual goal may be to arrive at a common goal or to provide information that will help the student see that his or her goal was inappropriate and unrealistic or that he or she had misconceptions about the vocational counseling process and the role of the occupational specialist. In this case, the body of the counseling session will focus on the occupational specialist's explaining his or her role and the ways in which the counselor can help the student achieve self-help. After one or more meetings in which this is the goal, the student and the occupational specialist will be able to develop a plan in which the student outlines more realistic goals and objectives to serve as the opening and body of subsequent meetings.

**Self-Analysis Worksheet**

1. I greeted the student
   (a) at the door _____
   (b) behind my desk _____
   (c) not at all _____
2. When I did not know the student:
   (a) we spent 5-10 minutes in small talk _____
   (b) we went immediately to the problem _____

   When I did know the student:
   (a) I gave no greeting _____
   (b) I gave a 1-2 minute greeting _____
   (c) I gave a lengthy greeting _____
3. I stated the goals and objectives for our session. Yes _____ No _____
   The goals were:

   The student stated the goals for our session. Yes _____ No _____
   They were:

   We did not discuss the goals and/or objectives of our meeting. Yes _____ No _____
4. I gave the student my undivided attention. Yes _____ No _____
   I used verbal following skills. Yes _____ No _____
   I used basic attending behaviors. Yes _____ No _____
5. I restated the goals and objectives of our meeting at the end. Yes _____ No _____
6. I summarized the things we talked about today. Yes _____ No _____
   They were:

7. We set a time for our next meeting. Yes _____ No _____
   We agreed on tasks to be completed before the next session. Yes _____ No _____

| **The tasks are:** | **To be completed by:** |
|---|---|
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |
| _____ | _____ |

**Self-Test 4**

1. List the four parts of a counseling session.

2. List three behaviors the occupational specialist should practice in the first part of the counseling session.

3. List the components of the last phase of the counseling session.

# ENABLING ELEMENT 5

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to discuss vocational counseling strategies to use with vocationally undecided students and with students who have tentative vocational choices, and you will be able to describe two games students who come for vocational counseling may play.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and one of the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 5. If you cannot answer the questions on the test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for additional activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "Vocational Counseling Strategies."
2. Read: Rosenberg, Howard. "Games the Vocationally Undecided Play." The Personnel and Guidance Journal 56 (December 1977): 229-234.
3. Read pages 131-147 in: Hoppock, Robert. Occupational Information, 3rd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1967.
4. Read: Thompson, Anthony P. "Client Misconceptions in Vocational Counseling." The Personnel and Guidance Journal 55 (September 1976): 30-33.
5. Tape-record a simulated counseling session between you and a colleague. In the session, you are to be the occupational specialist, while your partner plays the role of either an undecided student, a student with an unrealistic vocational choice, or a student saying, "Yes, but." After the session, listen to the tape and discuss with your partner:
   (a) what you liked about the tape
   (b) what you would do differently next time
   (c) what specific behaviors you may wish to change

## Vocational Counseling Strategies

Hoppock (1976) divided students seeking vocational counseling into three categories:

1. the student with no preference
2. the student who has made a tentative choice
3. the student with an unrealistic choice

These divisions or groups of students relate directly to various counseling strategies.

The student with no preference is basically the student who comes into the occupational specialist's office with the statement "I need to make a career choice, but I don't know what I want to do." The basic implication here is that the occupational specialist is the expert and therefore can tell the student what to do. Given this kind of student, the occupational specialist will first want to provide some basic information. For example, he or she will want to clarify to the student that vocational choice is **not** a choice made at a point in time, but rather a developmental process occurring over the years and consisting of a series of smaller choices. Further, he or she should point out that even after the occupational specialist provides vocational counseling, the student may still not know **exactly** what shape the career will take, since it is impossible to predict the future. Thus, a final, binding

decision may not be made, nor may it even be desirable. The occupational specialist may want to say something like this:

> John, I am really glad you came in to talk to me; however, I think it is important that you realize you may not find **one** occupation or job in which you will want to work for the rest of your life. Actually, though, this may be good. It is impossible to predict the future, and as you know, today there are jobs that did not even exist ten years ago. In addition, since people change, you may want to consider numerous alternatives that will suit you as you change. Even when you do decide on the direction you want to take, you may still want to keep other possible career choices on the "back burner."

In counseling the student who has no preference, the occupational specialist will want to gather information on the student's hobbies or on how the student spends leisure time. He or she will want to explore with the student past experiences, such as prior jobs or school work. The occupational specialist may ask the student to verbalize his or her likes, dislikes, values, interests, and abilities, and discuss whether he or she enjoys working with things, people, or data. Less direct questions to the student may also provide other valuable insights.

The occupational specialist may want to encourage the student to arrange to take some aptitude or interest tests from the guidance counselor, if the student has not already done so. However, the occupational specialist should point out to the student that a test or tests **cannot** tell a person what to do. They can only clarify interests and abilities; decision making remains the student's responsibility.

If the student already seems to possess a fair amount of self-knowledge, the occupational specialist may wish to recommend involvement in a group experience where members share knowledge of various occupations or participate in exercises intended to clarify students' values relative to occupational choices.

An easier student to counsel is one who has made a tentative choice or has narrowed his or her alternatives. This student is generally "reality testing" with the occupational specialist and wants to see if the occupational specialist thinks the choices are as logical as the student thinks they are.

Since the choices often have been made on the basis of the student's interests and abilities, one common misconception that is held by this type of student is that these two factors are interchangeable. This may not be the case (Thompson, 1976). Many of us have interests, but lack the abilities needed to pursue vocations based on them. Conversely, we may have abilities, but lack the interest to capitalize on them. For many students, making a distinction between interest and ability will be a freeing experience. An understanding of this distinction may enable the student for the first time to feel comfortable about saying, "I am an accomplished pianist, but I do not want to become a piano teacher," or, "I enjoy writing, but I do not have enough talent to become a successful writer." The occupational specialist may want to spend some time talking about how vocations and avocations can both play a role in meeting needs and fulfilling interests.

Other ways of helping students compare and evaluate career choices may involve suggesting part-time jobs or volunteer ac-

tivities that will provide additional feedback to the student. Some students may find it helpful to use the student checklist or "Outline for the Study of an Occupation" found in Appendix G of Hoppock's Occupational Information (3rd ed., 1967). After the student has completed the outline for each career under consideration, he or she can compare the results and discuss them with the occupational specialist.

When providing vocational counseling, the occupational specialist must also be aware of a number of "games" that the students who come for counseling may play, albeit unintentionally. If there are enough behaviors to indicate that the student is in fact trying to fool himself or herself or the occupational specialist, the student should be gently confronted and made to realize what is really happening.

Rosenberg (1977) identified nine such games. In one of these, "Look How Hard I Have Tried," students attempt to show the occupational specialist how hard they have tried to reach a career decision, when in fact, they may have taken many tests but want the responsibility for the ultimate decision placed elsewhere. Another game is "Where the Jobs Are." In this game, the student wants the occupational specialist to confirm what the student probably already knows about the alternatives chosen. As another facet of this game, the student appears ready to make a career decision on the basis of a job's availability or financial status, without acknowledging his or her own interests or skills. A third game is "Yes, but," where the more the occupational specialist tries to help the student, the more objections the student raises.

None of these games is played with malicious motives. The student feels compelled to play them as a way of dealing with peer or parental pressure to make a career decision or because the thought of making a real decision is too frightening. If the occupational specialist feels that a game is being played, it may be helpful to explore with the student the feelings that prompt the game or the reasons for playing the game. For example, the occupational specialist might say, "It is really scary to think that all of your friends know what they want to do and you are feeling very uncertain." This kind of statement, if accurate, allows the student to express any fears in a supportive environment, and then move on to finding a more protective way of alleviating the fears and anxieties.

To deal with these games, Rosenberg (1977) offers five suggestions. These are:

1. "Reverse the responsibility." The occupational specialist must place responsibility on the student and **not** allow the student to place responsibility on the occupational specialist.
2. "Accentuate the game." The occupational specialist can exaggerate or overemphasize the behavior to help the student become more aware of it.
3. "Give feedback." To avoid creating defensiveness in the student, the occupational specialist can say, "Are you saying that . . ."or "Are you really saying . . . ."
4. "Emphasize information gathering." Rosenberg notes that many games thrive on a lack of information. Thus, the occupational specialist will want to encourage information gathering before any decision-making activities take place.

5. "Deal with avoidance of decision making." Talking about the pressures of decision making will bring the issue into the open. The occupational specialist may also want to explore whether the student is ready to make decisions, keeping the focus on individual differences and individual "readiness." As an overall tactic to use in reducing the students' game-playing behavior, Rosenberg suggests teaching assertiveness, value clarification, and decision making, if there is time for more in-depth counseling with a student, in addition to providing supportive counseling and behavioral contracting.

Before deciding that a student is playing a game and needs to be confronted about it, the occupational specialist should remember that games are like defense mechanisms. We **all** play some games, just as we **all** use defense mechanisms. The important thing is not to overuse or abuse them.

**Self-Test 5**

1. Discuss a specific vocational counseling strategy for use with each of the following types of student:
   A. Vocationally undecided student:

   B. Student with a tentative vocational choice:

   C. Student with an unrealistic vocational choice:

2. Discuss two games students who come for vocational counseling may play.

3. List three strategies to counter games that students may play.

# ENABLING ELEMENT 6

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to list the three steps in the decision-making process and explain the importance of this process.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and one of the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 6. If you cannot answer the questions on the self-test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for additional activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "Decision-making Skills."
2. With a partner, conduct a simulated session in which you help the "student" go through the decision-making process. Ask your partner to critique you after the session.
3. Read: Jensen, D.A., and Dilley, J.S. "Vocational Decision-making Models: A Review and Comparative Analysis." In Career Counseling: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives, edited by Stephen G. Weinrach, pp. 209-214. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1979.
4. Read chapter 17 in: Hoppock, Robert. Occupational Information. 4th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1976.
5. Think about a recent decision you made. Outline the steps you took to arrive at your decision.

## Decision-making Skills

When the student comes to the occupational specialist with a problem concerning vocational choices, one of the goals to be addressed during the counseling process must be the student's attainment of decision-making skills. To facilitate this, the occupational specialist should explain to the student the decision-making process and the behaviors and activities in which one must engage in order to make appropriate decisions.

There are three basic steps involved in the decision-making process. They are:

1. viewing as many alternatives as possible
2. weighing the alternatives by considering the advantages and disadvantages of each
3. implementing the decision when it is reached

In vocational counseling, the student and occupational specialist may discuss at length the student's background, interests, grades, etc., and they may schedule one or more tests to confirm their preliminary conclusions or to provide additional data about the student. In tandem with this, they list all possible career alternatives, with the student being encouraged to start the list and the occupational specialist adding to it only when the student has exhausted his or her ideas.

Once the student and the occupational specialist have compiled their information about the student and all possible careers, they use their data in listing the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. Again, if the occupational specialist begins by offering suggestions, the student may take a less active role. For this reason, the student should once more begin the listing process,

with the occupational specialist serving only to supplement the inventory of advantages and disadvantages.

The next part of the process involves the student's evaluating and rank-ordering the alternatives. To encourage this, the occupational specialist may want to ask the student, "What seems to be your best alternative?" followed by, "What seems to be the least attractive alternative on your list?" After the most attractive alternatives have been identified and the least attractive eliminated, the occupational specialist and the student will want to consider additional information or experiences that may help the student arrive at a decision. For example, the student may wish to talk to individuals in a given career or do additional reading on the range of opportunities in the field, if this has not previously been done.

At this point, the occupational specialist may wish to help the student move more in the direction of the best alternative, or the student may wish to explore other priority alternatives. When the student is satisfied with the decision, the occupational specialist and the student may either terminate the counseling session or continue by discussing when and in what ways to implement the decision.

**Self-Test 6**

1. Why are decision-making skills important?

2. What are the three major steps in the decision-making process?

# ENABLING ELEMENT 7

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to identify special considerations in counseling with women, handicapped persons, and minority students.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and one of the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 7. If you cannot answer the questions on the test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for additional activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "Vocational Counseling with Special Populations."
2. Read: Ginzberg, Eli. "Guiding the Disadvantaged." In Career Counseling: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives, edited by Stephen G. Weinrach, pp. 267-275. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1979.
3. Read: Overs, Robert P. "Career Behavior of the Physically and Mentally Handicapped."
   **or** read: Campbell, Robert E. "Special Groups and Career Behavior: Implications for Guidance."
   **or** read any other chapter in: Picou, J. Steven, and Campbell, Robert E. Career Behavior of Special Groups. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill Publishing Co., 1975.
4. Tape a vocational counseling session with a minority or handicapped student. Be sure to ask the student's permission **before** you tape the session. Listen to the tape and evaluate it, either alone or with a colleague. What are your strengths and weaknesses? Are your own biases imposed on the student? What would you do differently?
5. Complete the Special Populations Worksheet included in this element.

## Vocational Counseling with Special Populations

The occupational specialist will undoubtedly be called upon to provide vocational counseling for minority students, women, and handicapped persons. While basic counseling strategies will still be utilized, the occupational specialist must be aware of special needs of each of these three groups.

One basic need of all three groups is the expansion of the career alternatives available. Since all three groups may lack role models in various professions, many of the students in these groups may view their range of choices as narrower than they probably are. The occupational specialist must be alert to statements such as "The only thing I will ever be is . . ." or "I would like to be a doctor, but know I can only work as a nurse."

When counseling girls and women, the occupational specialist must be cognizant that female students may need to explore the ways in which marriage and career can be successfully combined. Since historically many women have not been encouraged to develop their full potential, the occupational specialist must assist in rectifying this. To be most effective in counseling female students,

the occupational specialist must first examine his or her own attitudes about women in nontraditional careers, since the occupational specialist's biases and prejudices will be evident to students in a counseling session. For example, the occupational specialist might ask, "How do I feel about a woman as a linesman (or linesperson) with the telephone company?" "Would I take my pet to a female veterinarian?" Although these may be painful questions, the occupational specialist is encouraged to answer them honestly. If there are negative attitudes, a first step in countering them is to get to know more women currently employed in nontraditional careers. This will serve a two-fold purpose: it may change the occupational specialist's own values, and it will also provide a resource list of persons who can help female students think about nontraditional occupations.

The issue of attitudes and values also relates to counseling minority students. The occupational specialist might ask, "Do I encourage minority students to look at various alternatives or do I just encourage them in the jobs they are used to?" "Do I encourage them to pursue nonprofessional jobs when they may possess the potential for higher-paying jobs?" "Do I let their individual backgrounds limit their career choices, or do I attempt to help them overcome environmental and social obstacles?"

Stone (1975) has listed three goals to work on when counseling minority students. These are: "(a) satisfaction of basic needs; (b) modification and/or development of new life style; and (c) transcendence of personal and environmental obstacles" (p. 253). The occupational specialist must recognize that racism is still an issue that has not been overcome, and many minority students may have adopted negative self-concepts because of the way they have been treated in the past. Members of minorities who have achieved success can be used as positive role models for these students to help them develop positive attitudes about themselves, and to help them broaden the scope of careers they may consider as possible alternatives.

Handicapped students may have either physical or mental impairments that result in a vocational handicap. Although many of these students will have additional resources available to them, such as the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation or the Division of Blind Services, they may also seek out the occupational specialist for help. Once again, the occupational specialist must be aware of his or her own biases and prejudices and come to terms with them. In providing vocational counseling to handicapped students, the focus should be on what the student **can** do, rather than on what he or she **cannot** do.

Another point for the occupational specialist to keep in mind is that handicapped persons cannot be considered as a homogeneous group. Not all students in wheelchairs are alike, nor are all blind students alike. They exhibit the same continuum of needs, interests, abilities, and values that nonhandicapped persons have. In the same way, handicapped students will be ranged all across the independence/dependence scale, varying greatly in their ability to get along by themselves. These differences, and a recognition of them, are critical factors in the provision of realistic career counseling for these special students.

To consider as many vocational alter-

natives as possible and to help the handicapped student think in terms of more possibilities, the occupational specialist must go beyond the old stereotyped occupations and consider the student's mobility, intellectual functioning, and motivation, as well as any special characteristics of the student's disease or disability, such as whether it is progressive. If the occupational specialist is counseling a student with an unfamiliar condition, it is important to do some additional reading or talk to a medical consultant in the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation to gather more information that may be pertinent to the handicapped student's career development.

One part of the job of the occupational specialist who is counseling women, minority students, and handicapped students may be to serve as their advocate with potential employers who may not be particularly willing to give them a chance. To do this, the occupational specialist may need to explore the resources available to help change employers' attitudes and open the doors for students in special populations.

**Special Populations Worksheet**

A student has come to see you to get help in deciding whether to study drafting at a technical school or to take the basic courses at a junior college and postpone making a career decision until a later date.
How would you counsel each of the following students?

White Female Student

Black Male Student

Male Student with Cerebral Palsy

**Self-Test 7**

1. Why is it important for the occupational specialist to be aware of his or her own biases?

2. What are the three goals in counseling minority students?

3. What information is needed when counseling handicapped students?

4. Why are special considerations necessary in counseling female students?

# ENABLING ELEMENT 8

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to list three advantages of the short-term contractual approach to vocational counseling, six ways to gather information, and one purpose of the case conference approach.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and one of the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 8. If you cannot answer the questions on the test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for additional activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "Innovative Approaches to Vocational Counseling."
2. Complete the Innovative Approaches Worksheet included in this element.
3. Read chapter 13 in: Hollis, J.W., and Hollis, L.U. Personalizing Information Processes. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969.
4. Read chapter 10 in: Norris, W.; Hatch, R.; Engelkes, J.; and Winborn, B. The Career Information Service. 4th ed. Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1979.

## Innovative Approaches to Vocational Counseling

A number of specialized programs and approaches that have been developed may provide an outline or a set of guidelines for the occupational specialist to consider in providing vocational counseling to students. The short-term contractual approach developed by Montgomery (1975) allows the occupational specialist to assist the student with psychological concerns that may accompany career concerns. Advantages of this approach include:

1. efficiency
2. outcome assessment
3. diminished game playing

With a contract between them, the occupational specialist and the student have a common set of expectations, defined in behavioral terms, and thus a more specific means of assessing whether or not they accomplish the goals they set forth. Games are minimized because the appropriate behaviors of both the student and occupational specialist have been identified clearly. Thus, when one party does not fulfill the agreement, the discrepancy between the behavior outlined in the contract and the behavior observed can be addressed directly.

For the contractual approach to work well, the occupational specialist must be skillful at helping the student state his or her goals in behavioral terms. To facilitate this, the student must be asked such questions as "What behaviors do you want to change?" "Why do you want to change these behaviors?" The student will need to be encouraged to use concrete language and give examples, since the tendency for most people is to speak in vague, rather than behavioral, terms.

Once the behaviors have been identified, the next step is for the occupational specialist to get the student to assume responsibility for

making the desired changes and to move from discussion to action. As Montgomery points out, this action stage can best be effected if the larger goal is broken down into several steps, each one small enough to be easily accomplished yet large enough to allow the student to see some real change. The occupational specialist will need to be firm but supportive, using humor, warmth, and caring, rather than anger or irritation. As time goes on, he or she should remain alert to any modification that may be needed in the original contract.

Another strategy focuses on positively reinforcing the student's information-seeking behavior and effecting behavior modification. Stewart and Fiedler developed this strategy and noted six ways to gather information (Norris, et al., 1979):

1. writing
2. asking questions
3. visiting
4. observing
5. listening
6. reading

In using this strategy, the occupational specialist assists the student in strengthening specific skills, such as determining where to write or what to read. For example, if the occupational specialist notes deficiencies in the student's writing skills, he or she could have the student write sample questions. If the deficiency is in telephone communication, the occupational specialist and the student might role-play until the student's skills are satisfactory.

The occupational specialist explains to the student exactly what the student is to do in seeking information and assigns the student specific tasks. Together, they then process the information the student has gained, and the occupational specialist helps the student assimilate the data.

Another approach to vocational counseling is the case conference, which, as Hoppock (1976) notes, has been used in a variety of ways. It enables the occupational specialist to work with a small group of students and help them start thinking about career planning. To begin, the occupational specialist would select a "case," based upon a former student with a fairly common problem. If the occupational specialist is new and does not have a repertoire of cases, the case can be hypothetical. Naturally, if the case of an actual student is presented, the real name is not used. The occupational specialist may also wish to ask the students to prepare cases to present, thus allowing them to disguise their **own** problems for consideration. The salient facts of the case are presented, and the presenter/occupational specialist then asks the group, "If this were your problem, how would you handle it?" The occupational specialist functions as a moderator while the group discusses the case. Although he or she will not want to express opinions during the group discussion, it is appropriate for the occupational specialist to raise any important considerations that the students may overlook. Hoppock notes that if the group decides to vote on how to deal with the problem, it is important for the discussion leader to point out that the group vote may not indicate a "correct" judgment. If a real case has been used, at the end of the discussion the group should be told of the actual outcome of the case. Again, the occupational specialist will want to point out that the action taken by the student in the case may not have been the "best" solution.

The case conference can be modified in numerous ways. The occupational specialist may ask the students, "If you had planned on becoming a _____ and could not enter the occupation of your choice, what other occupation might you choose? Why?" Another variation is to develop a set of flash cards of information. The students determine what and how much information they need before making an occupational choice.

There is plenty of room for innovation in vocational counseling. Once the occupational specialist assesses the needs of his or her students, there is no limit to the new strategies that can be devised or the modifications that can be developed to fit the circumstances. Even if the new or newly modified strategy does not work the first time it is tried, the attempt will serve as a learning experience for the occupational specialist and alert him or her to additional modifications that will make it more effective in providing vocational counseling to the students who have come for help.

**Innovative Approaches Worksheet**

1. Think of a student you have counseled with whom you might have used the contractual approach. Outline below how you might have aided that student in developing a contract. Do you think this might have changed the outcome of your counseling with that student?

2. Describe below a "case" (real or hypothetical) that you could present to a group. The description should be no longer than 3-5 sentences.

**Self-Test 8**

1. Describe the case conference approach.

2. Describe the information-seeking strategy.

3. Describe the contractual approach to vocational counseling.

# ENABLING ELEMENT 9

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to list three kinds of resources used by occupational specialists and explain why resources are important.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and one of the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 9. If you cannot answer the questions on the test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for additional activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "Resources for Vocational Counseling."
2. Read: Oliver, W.L. "Using Community Resources." In Facilitating Career Development, edited by Robert C. Reardon and Harman D. Burck, pp. 197-212. Springfield, Ill.: Charles C. Thomas, 1975.
3. Read appendix F in: Weinrach, Stephen G., ed. Counseling: Theoretical and Practical Perspectives. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1979.
4. List a number of resources within your community that you have not yet utilized, but that would be appropriate for you to contact.

## Resources for Vocational Counseling

The occupational specialist must not only be knowledgeable about the various resources that are available for vocational counseling, he or she must also possess the ability to utilize that knowledge in the counseling setting. The three basic categories of resources for the occupational specialist are:

1. people
2. places
3. publications

Resource people within the community must be developed, so that they are most accessible to the students. It is more helpful to recommend to a student that he or she contact a specific person, John Doe, than merely to suggest that the student find a carpenter with whom to talk. The occupational specialist may choose to keep a card file listing different persons in the community who are willing to come to school to talk to students or who will meet with one or more students at the employment site. As with any filing system, a "people file" will need to be periodically updated. The occupational specialist can begin such a file by speaking to civic and service clubs or business associations and soliciting their involvement. Possible groups to contact include: Kiwanis Club, Lions Club, Downtown Merchants' Association, Business and Professional Women's Association, and Jaycees.

Another kind of resource closely linked with people is a place that can serve as a resource. This includes employment sites where students can observe workers. Again, a card file may be helpful and would include such information as: name of the business or agency, hours of operation, preference for group or individual visitation, contact person, and occupational categories employed. The occupational specialist can develop such a

file by contacting businesses or industries listed in the local telephone book or by obtaining a listing from the local chamber of commerce. Place resources also include such sites as the state employment service, so that students will learn firsthand how they can utilize the services available to them.

A third kind of resource is publications. It is important for the occupational specialist to be on all appropriate mailing lists so that information can be continually updated. Since a great number of agencies and organizations are involved in career information, it is impossible to list them all; however, a number of textbooks have excellent listings in their appendixes.

Some of these textbooks are:

1. Hollis, J.W., and Hollis, L.U. Personalizing Information Processes. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1969.
2. Hoppock, Robert. Occupational Information. 4th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1976.
3. Norris, W.; Hatch, R.; Engelkes, J.; and Winborn, B. The Career Information Service. 4th ed. Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1979.

In Florida, the occupational specialist should receive the Florida Occupational Information Newsletter published monthly by the Florida Association of Rehabilitation Facilities, Inc./FLOICC (Suite L-500, 325 John Knox Rd., Tallahassee, Florida 32303). The purpose of this newsletter is to increase communication among users of occupational information and to provide information about available resources. Another state organization with excellent publications for the occupational specialist is the Florida Division of Vocational Education, which puts out the Career and Educational Planning Guide. The Center for Career Development Services, VIEW/Apprenticeship Project, Florida Department of Education (Knott Building, Tallahassee, Florida 32304) has a 16mm color film describing "Apprenticeship Training in Florida," which is available on a no-charge loan to interested agencies. The Center also publishes a newsletter that all occupational specialists should receive.

The occupational specialist should also be aware of numerous computerized occupational information systems that are now available, such as CHOICES in Florida. With these systems, in addition to exploring occupations, students can compare occupations, relate one occupation to another, and gather specific information on a single career. In 1981, there were 40 pilot sites operating in Florida.

**Self-Test 9**

1. List three categories of resources.

2. Describe two ways of developing resources in each of the categories noted above.

# ENABLING ELEMENT 10

After having completed the assigned instructional activities, you will be able to describe the four parts of an Individualized Written Professional Development Program.

## Instructional Activities

Complete activity 1 and one ot the remaining items. Then take Self-Test 10. If you cannot answer the questions on the test correctly, repeat the activities and follow the instructions for additional activities until you are able to complete the element successfully.

1. Read the following section on "Keeping Current: Professionalism in Vocational Counseling."
2. Complete the Professional Development Worksheet included in this element.
3. Read pages 469-471 in: Norris, W.; Hatch, R.; Engelkes, J.; and Winborn, B. The Career Information Service. 4th ed. Chicago: Rand McNally College Publishing Co., 1979.
4. List five reasons for needing to increase your professional development and continuing education activities.
5. Read chapter 19 in: Patterson, C.H. An Introduction to Counseling in the School. New York: Harper and Row, 1971.

## Keeping Current: Professionalism in Vocational Counseling

Possessing the necessary skills to provide meaningful vocational counseling is not enough. Vocations evolve, counseling skills can be refined, and the needs of students change. The students of the 60s were not the students of the 70s, nor do we necessarily know what external forces may impact on the students of the 1980s. Professional development or continuing education is a requirement of many professions and a necessity for most. The occupational specialist will want to take an active role in seeking new learning environments and experiences, rather than taking a passive role by attending only to those learning experiences required by administrators. Time and money are always critical factors, but support for continuing education activities at all levels in the school system is growing. Released time and minimal financial support are now more available than ever before.

The focus of this module has been on an individualized approach based on the individual student's needs. In the same way, the occupational specialist's individualized needs should be addressed. He or she should undertake a critical self-examination of strengths and weaknesses and develop an Individualized Written Professional Development Program (IWPDP) with goals, objectives, appropriate time frames, and desired outcomes all considered. Secondary ignorance (not knowing that one does not know) is generally **not** the problem; the problem is in motivating the occupational specialist to act in such a way as to remediate, minimize, prevent, or improve those individual lapses of which he or she is aware.

How does the occupational specialist develop an IWPDP? It may be accomplished alone or in conjunction with another occupational specialist, the school guidance

counselor, or an administrator. It may involve joining additional professional organizations, subscribing to (and **reading**) a new journal, or attending relevant professional meetings. For example, the occupational specialist who finds him or herself counseling a number of handicapped students who have been mainstreamed in the school system may benefit from attending a local or state special education conference or a National Rehabilitation Association meeting. If counseling skills need improvement, alternatives might include:

1. attending an American Personnel and Guidance Association local, state, or national meeting
2. attending a weekend workshop
3. enrolling in a night or summer course at a nearby college or participating in an extension course
4. borrowing some books from the school guidance counselor and discussing with that person what has been read.

If time is a problem, the occupational specialist may do well to begin his or her professional development activities by reading about or attending a workshop on time-management.

Vocational counseling is an involved business, and it is almost impossible to stay abreast of all new developments in the field. In addition, the complexity and number of skills and knowledges required can be only minimally mastered in any program of higher education. However, by developing a program of continuing education, the occupational specialist makes an honest effort to combat professional obsolescence.

Vocational counseling is also a draining activity. The occupational specialist may feel that he or she gives and gives with very little "coming in." Professional development activities revitalize the professional and can offer a new perspective, a new outlook, or at least a means to continue on in a better way. Pitfalls of vocational counseling include such things as standard responses, cursory classification of students, hearing only what is expected, and cynicism. Students may begin to feel unimportant or ignored. Professional development activities help counter these pitfalls. A concept often expressed in the counseling profession is that the counselor needs to keep his or her own life in order and be continually aware of personal biases, values, and wants. Not only can professional development and continuing education activities assist with this process, but they are among the standards listed in the counselor's code of ethics.

**Professional Development Worksheet**

Professional Development Goal:

Objectives: (1)
(2)
(3)

| | Activities for Each Objective | Time Frame for Completing Each Activity | Outcome (Was Activity Completed?) |
|---|---|---|---|
| (1) | (a) | | |
| | (b) | | |
| | (c) | | |
| | (d) | | |
| (2) | (a) | | |
| | (b) | | |
| | (c) | | |
| | (d) | | |
| (3) | (a) | | |
| | (b) | | |
| | (c) | | |
| | (d) | | |

**Self-Test 10**

1. What are the parts of an Individualized Written Professional Development Program?

2. List four reasons professional development and continuing education activities are important for the occupational specialist who provides vocational counseling.

3. List two examples of continuing education activities.

## POST ASSESSMENT

**1.** a. Define vocational counseling. (To verify your answer, see Element 1. Score 10 points.)

b. List five ways the occupational specialist helps the student by providing vocational counseling. (To verify, see Element 1. Score 2 points for each method, for a total of 10 points.)

(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)
(5)

**2.** a. List two major theories that explain career choice. (To verify, see Element 2. Score 5 points for each theory, for a total of 10 points.)

(1)

(2)

b. Provide an example for each of the categories listed above and briefly describe each example. (To verify, see Element 2. Score 5 points for each example, for a total of 10 points.)
(1)

(2)

**3.** a. Describe the three essential qualities of a vocational counselor. (To verify, see Element 3. Score 5 points for each quality, for a total of 15 points.)
(1)

(2)

(3)

b. Why are these qualities important? (To verify, see Element 3. Score 5 points.)

**4.** a. List the four parts of a counseling session. (To verify, see Element 4. Score 1 point for each part, for a total of 4 points.)
(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)

b. Describe two behaviors the occupational specialist should practice in each part of the counseling session. (To verify, see Element 4. Score 2 points for each behavior, for a total of 16 points.)
(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

(6)

(7)

(8)

**5.** a. Discuss a specific vocational counseling strategy for use with each of the following. (To verify, see Element 5. Score 5 points for each strategy, for a total of 10 points.)
(1) A vocationally undecided student

(2) A student who has a tentative vocational choice

b. Describe two games students who come for vocational counseling may play. (To verify, see Element 5. Score 5 points for each game, for a total of 10 points.)
(1)

(2)

**6.** a. List the three steps in the decision-making process. (To verify, see Element 6. Score 5 points for each step, for a total of 15 points.)
(1)
(2)
(3)

b. Why is this process important? (To verify, see Element 6. Score 5 points.)

**7.** Circle (T) for True or (F) for False in responding to each of the following statements. (To verify, see Element 7. Score 5 points for each correct response, for a total of 20 points.)

T F a. In counseling with women, minority students, and handicapped students, the occupational specialist must be aware of the special needs of these students.

T F b. The attitudes of the occupational specialist are not as important as the attitudes of the students.

T F c. Three goals in counseling minority students are (1) satisfaction with basic needs, (2) modification or development of new life style, and (3) transcendence of personal and environmental obstacles.

T F d. In counseling with handicapped students, the focus must be equally divided between what they can do and what they cannot do.

**8.** a. List three advantages to the short-term contractual approach to vocational counseling. (To verify, see Element 8. Score 2 points for each advantage, for a total of 6 points.)
(1)
(2)
(3)

b. List six ways to gather information. (To verify, see Element 8. Score 2 points for each method, for a total of 12 points.)
(1)
(2)
(3)
(4)
(5)
(6)

c. Describe one purpose of the case conference approach (To verify, see Element 8. Score 2 points.)

**9.** a. List three kinds of resources used by occupational specialists. (To verify, see Element 9. Score 5 points for each resource, for a total of 15 points.)
(1)
(2)
(3)

b. Why are resources important? (To verify, see Element 9. Score 5 points.)

**10.** Describe the four parts of an Individualized Written Professional Development Program. (To verify, see Element 10. Score 5 points for each part, for a total of 20 points.)
(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

Total value of points = 200

If your score is below 160, you should consult your supervisor or repeat those elements in which you did not do well.

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## Additional Sources for Vocational Counseling Materials

The following agencies are concerned with improving occupational and educational information:

National Occupational Information Coordinating Committee
Donohoe Building, Room 3746
Sixth and D Streets SW
Washington, DC 20202

Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education
Division of Research and Demonstration
ROB-3, Room 5042
Seventh and D Streets SW
Washington, DC 20202

Office of Career Education
ROB-3, Room 3100
Seventh and D Streets SW
Washington, DC 20202

National Institute of Education
Division on Education in Home, Community, and Work
Brown Building, Room 816
1200 Nineteenth Street NW
Washington, DC 20208

National Occupational Information Service
Employment and Training Administration
Patrick Henry Building, Room 9122
601 D Street NW
Washington, DC 20213

Office of Youth Programs
Employment and Training Administration
Patrick Henry Building, Room 6000
601 D Street NW
Washington, DC 20213